

**MINUTES OF BROCKWELL LIDO USERS' FORUM/AGM
HELD IN WHIPPERSNAPPERS ROOM AT BROCKWELL LIDO
SATURDAY SEPT 24 2011**

In attendance: approximately 62 members, users and representatives from:

Fusion

Penny Arnold, Commercial and Operations Manager
Rohan Bissessar, Brockwell Lido Operations Manager
Craig Hawtin, Brockwell Lido General Manager
Peter Kay, Chief Executive
Wendy Smith, Divisional Business Manager

Lambeth

Claudia Aristide, Senior Client Officer (Leisure)

Apologies Julian Fox, Philip Arundell, Ros Tabor, Andy Murray, Rebecca Walker

Welcome and introductions

Linda Spashett, standing in for Yvonne Levy, BLU Chair, who had been unwell, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked for a show of hands to get a sense of who did what at the Lido -

Gym: About 33%

Classes: c 7 people

Spa: c 8 people

Pool: majority: 90%

Whippersnappers: 4/5 hands

Café: 90%

2) How did things go this year? Priorities for next year

Report from Fusion Management:

Peter Kay - Chief Executive: delighted to be present again. This was his 6th or 7th attendance. The year had been overshadowed by the death of Richard Turner, who had been taken ill and died while swimming at the Lido. He expressed condolences to Richard's family and thanked the lifeguards and all the Fusion Team for whom it had also been traumatic and very upsetting.

This was the 5th year since renovation and reopening. The main aim had always been to keep it a sound and stable operation and support the Pool, developing longer season and longer opening hours. Unfortunately, because of the bad summer, attendances generally had been down. But revenue was up and he noted that despite the bad weather there was a growing number of regular swimmers.

Repair and maintenance: £185k had been spent this past year on upkeep and maintenance, as high as any other facility and intended to reflect modern equipment. Brockwell, he noted, was one of the busiest and most used of their facilities. The pool had been repainted, the dosing equipment in the main pool and spa had been replaced. Damp had been treated in the building and new equipment had been bought for the pool including inflatables and a pool vac. However, the pool was showing signs of defects and there would have to be a programme of repair this winter. Peter Kay also mentioned that Fusion were looking at a major replacement of the pool plant in 3-5 years. He admitted there had been issues in the Spa which he felt were now resolved.

He announced that there would be a winter swim season this year, though specific details had yet to be worked out. Pricing would be the same as for the current season. Likely opening hours – 2 hours a day, 3 times a week. Obviously there would be health & safety issues but Fusion's aim was to keep growing the season.

Finally, he offered thanks to Mary Hill who had been BLU's representative on the Fusion Board. She had made a huge contribution and they had much enjoyed working with her. He welcomed her successor, Ruth Thompson.

Wendy Smith – Divisional Business Manager

Wendy noted how useful regular meetings with BLU had been to gauge feedback and audience satisfaction. Admitted they still had lessons to learn but were continually striving to exceed expectations. 'We feel the passion', she added. Passion and ownership from Fusion team reflected the passion of users. She reiterated the refurbishment that had been undertaken in the Spa and upgrade on other facilities, and introduction of power plate machine in gym.

She was happy to announce the continuation of the School and Heritage programme and that the Schools programme had again grown this year.

Marketing & PR: several celebrities had turned up and been willing to be used in promoting Brockwell Lido.

Craig Hawtin – Lido Manager

Craig was thrilled that the winter season would be going ahead. He drew attention to the change of emphasis which the Lido had undertaken which was looking at ways of enhancing healthy living. He was also looking at the health suite area and ways of re-using it, beauty therapy perhaps. He reiterated the upgrades that had taken place in the gym – a refit and the service schedule improved. Regarding participation: target groups had increased their numbers this year and with the Olympics approaching in 2012 looked to see the momentum being sustained.

Car Park: had been a really difficult problem to crack. Fusion had spent hours trying to get planning permission from Lambeth Council to install Pay & Display. Progress had been achieved after a meeting with Lambeth the previous week. Hopefully, by four weeks, the scheme would be in place allowing park and lido users two hours free parking, then a charge per hour thereafter, with a car park management company to oversee it.

Spa: Not had so many problems since a change to a chlorine based system.

On behalf of Ian Farlane – Divisional Sports and Community Development Officer for Fusion – Craig reported several successes. Last year's Carol Service drew 170 people; the two Mid-winter swims drew 250 in Dec and 70 in March. In May the Modern Movement event drew 500 visits in 2 days; the two cinema events attracted 450 people. Classes: boxing had been added; also pole-fit; buggy walking; and scuba was to be introduced.

Mike Johnstone's swim lessons had been very successful and much appreciated. The children's holiday camps had been hugely successful – over 500 attended in the summer.

Overall, Craig felt it had been a positive year. He had only been in post for six or seven months but was enjoying it.

Lambeth Perspectives:

Claudia Aristide: Senior Client Manager

Fusion's contract was overseen by the Council and the lease agreement monitored. Facilities checked and the Service Delivery Plan overseen. She gave special thanks to Craig - he had created a strong impression with Council officers and users, and better communication. Thanks to him there had been major changes with opening of the gates, events and programmes now running smoothly. Craig's input important for all of these.

She also paid tribute to Fusion and their commitment to improving the equipment, chlorine problems, turnaround times, improvements in cleaning and drying off in the changing rooms. She also praised the improved programme for access – the number of classes for young people and GP referral clients and healthy lifestyle for all sections of the community.

With regard to the car park, she admitted the sticking point seemed to be in Lambeth Planning Dept. She hoped the management plan and dissuading people from using disabled bays who were not disabled was now going forward.

Questions from the floor:

Peter Bradley spoke for many when he reminded the meeting that Craig and Wendy had been in negotiation since March for the pay & display car parking plan. He asked when Lambeth was going to give the go ahead. Wendy Smith assured the meeting it would be within 20 days of their last meeting Sept 14. Paperwork had got stuck, but a senior planning officer was now dealing with it.

Carolyn Weniz wanted to give a public thank you for the free swimming for the over 60s and to Craig for all the improvements that had been made since his arrival. Real thanks to him. This was enthusiastically supported by meeting attendees.

3) Brief Updates

Winter swimming season. Mary Ann Foxwell, who with Mary Hill had been negotiating the season, agreed it was fantastic news, though Peter Kay's sudden announcement had slightly stolen her thunder. Peter Kay said that unlike Tooting Bec, Fusion receive no subsidy towards swimming costs. All that was left was to work out details with Craig and the schedule for the repairs to the lining. Hopefully it would all happen before Christmas.

The Lido Café:

Daniel Edwards – co-owner with brother Duncan – reported that trading conditions were difficult. Overheads up by 30%, people eating out less and spending less; they had to work a lot harder given local competition. Despite this, it had been a positive and successful year. They had added new parasols on the terrace which allowed the season to be extended. They had started the business with no money. All the investment in the infrastructure had therefore to come from trade. Things like a disabled toilet and repaint and refurbishment were now urgently needed.

In association with Lambeth, the Dulwich Road entrance was going to have a make-over. The Café were now employing 40 young people from the local community; and commissioning flamenco nights and comedy nights, and they had also done the catering for the film screenings. Daniel paid tribute to Peter Forsyth who had some beautiful illustrations for the walls of the café that were now much in demand for people's homes. Accolades in the press, Café becoming a destination, so increasing the footfall for the Lido. He considered that what was offered for swimmers and gym users was better. He hoped they had responded to the comments from last year, but they could not offer hot food to swimmers on the swimmers' terrace or as takeaways. From the floor there was a request for the Beach Hut to serve more healthy food. Duncan said what they offered was what children wanted. He was reminded that not all customers were children.

He reminded everyone how difficult it was to increase capacity from the kitchen which was actually very small and didn't make life any easier because of that.

Whippersnappers: There was no representative from Whippersnappers, and no report.

4) Feedback from Users' Session chaired by Ruth Thompson. Attendees were asked to write down their comments on various aspects of the Lido. She urged people to make constructive as well as negative comments/suggestions. The results were discussed at items 7 and 8. A full account of the feedback has been circulated and will be available on the BLU website.

5) BLU business – led by Linda Spashett

Chair's Annual Report – there were no comments from the floor.

Minutes of last year's Forum/AGM – no comment and accepted.

Membership Report – Linda introduced this item on behalf of Membership Secretary, Linda Casbolt, who could not attend. 1560 members on the database; but approx 450 not active emails. BLU were now ceasing to send their newsletter, BLUprint, by post unless specifically asked for. This had been well advertised over the year. 30 members had indicated they still wished to receive it by post. **Any member who does still wish to receive the newsletter by post should write to: BLU, PO Box 27857, London SE24 9YP.** In response to comment from the floor Linda assured the meeting that BLU would always cater for non-computer and non-email users.

Financial Report: Sara Neish, Treasurer.

Report as circulated showed a closing balance for 2010 of £5,349.45. The balance of receipts over payments for the year to 31 Dec 2010 was -£58.00. This had been added to the £5407.45 brought forward from year ending 2009, making a new closing balance of £5,349.45.

Questioner asked what BLU was going to do with the extra cash. Yvonne pointed out, some of it was going towards the update of the website. It is hoped it would be up very soon and would include more pictures, more current news and greater accessibility.

Election of BLU committee, conducted by Adam Steinhouse

Before moving to the elections, Adam, who is also on the committee of Friends of Brockwell Park, had two announcements to make. One was to confirm that the plan to plant a wildflower border round the edges of the Lido was going forward. The other was to alert everyone to the campaign to save the Park Rangers. Lambeth had made them redundant. So far the campaign had failed. There were now great fears regarding the security of the Park.

The election of the BLU Committee was as follows:

Yvonne Levy – Chair; Linda Spashett – Deputy Chair; Sara Neish – Treasurer; Linda Casbolt – Membership Secretary; Tina Boye; Julian Fox; Mary Ann Foxwell; Mary Hill; Judy Holman; Humphrey Keenlyside; Caroline Riddell; Hylida Syms; Ruth Thompson; Carole Woddis. All were duly elected plus a new member who came forward: Fiona O'Cleirigh. Thanks to her.

6) Brockwell Lido Steering Committee Business

Mary Hill explained the makeup of the Brockwell Lido Steering Committee (BLSC). BLU is the Users' group. But the Lido is part of the park and community. Via the Steering Committee Lambeth, Fusion, the Park and Community members jointly engage with keeping the Lido going - particularly long term sustainability and monitoring quality with feedback from diverse users. BLSC is also responsible for auditing the annual SDP – Service Delivery

Plan. Mary paid tribute to Heather Kinal who was resigning and all the work she had put in as a member of BLSC. She was to be replaced by Tina Boye. Mary underlined that if there were any organisations who wished to be part of BLSC, they should contact her.

Claudia Aristide conducted the election for BLSC:

Giles Gibson - Herne Hill Forum

Sophia Marsh - Herne Hill Society

Miranda Payne - Effra Housing Co-operative

Michael Boyle - Friends of Brockwell Park

Lara Mifsud-Bonici - 2nd representative from Park

Yvonne Levy, Julian Fox, Tina Boye, Mary Hill, Ruth Thompson - Brockwell Lido Users

Mary Hill would be standing down as Chair. There were no objections.

7) Discussion of key issues from Feedback Session

Comments from session 4 were collated and summarised at the meeting. A full written account of feedback would be made available in a separate document and would appear on the BLU website. The feedback would also be submitted to the Brockwell Lido Steering Committee.

8) Comments in response to Feedback Session:

Tristram Sutton asked if the Lido was **working within Budget**. Wendy Smith confirmed it was; Fusion's commitment to the Lido was meeting its expectations, but Fusion continually hoped to raise them.

Regarding the issue of **lifeguards**, 'zoning' had been abandoned which meant in the summer months, the pool could be fully open more often. They had, however, always to consider Health & Safety issues which demanded a certain number of lifeguards per space used and swimmers.

With regard to **noise** leaking from one class to another Craig Hawtin admitted it continued to be a problem; all a question of scheduling. He had moved classes around to avoid this.

Also, he was continuing to look at how to introduce **more workshops** on general fitness.

Comment from the floor regarding **rubbish** - suggested that announcements could be made asking people to pick up their rubbish and place in bins.

Miranda Payne asked if **food in the Beach Hut** could be more directed to healthy eating.

Duncan from the **Café** commented that ordering by text could be expensive. He was aware of **noise problem** in the Café and was looking into soundproofing with material on the ceiling. Café was very echoey in its present state. Duncan and Daniel said they did alter the music system and tried to keep the volume low but every customer survey they had conducted indicated customers, other than swimmers, enjoyed the music. Admitted there was a tension between swimmers and café users.

In answer to a question regarding **improvements to the pool infrastructure**, Craig and Wendy said it was not yet on the budgetary agenda, though Wendy took note of a suggestion of tank lining. Another questioner raised the perennial question of the pool being heated, perhaps in winter. The Chair pointed out that ten years ago a consensus of users had been against pool heating, but that view might change. In regard to **sustainable energy**, Craig and Lambeth said they were looking into the possibility of solar panels.

Finally, Mary Hill reminded the meeting that there would be a BLU party on Sept 25, to celebrate its 10th anniversary. She also wished to thank Wendy Smith for all the support she had recently given to the Lido.

Linda Spashett closed the Forum at 12.05pm with thanks to Fusion, Lambeth, Whippersnappers, and all who had attended.